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ABSTRACT

A scientific sample of 820 Ohioans responded to a 10-question telephone survey about vocational education in Ohio. The findings, which can be generalized to all Ohioans, included the following: (1) four out of five say that it is extremely important or very important that vocational education remain part of high school programs; (2) nearly one of every two, their spouses, or one of their children has taken a vocational program; (3) one out of three say that the earnings of vocational graduates are above average compared to other high school graduates who do not go to college; (4) two out of three say that vocational programs do not limit students' opportunities to go to college; (5) one out of two know vocational students have to meet the same academic requirements for graduation as other students; (6) three out of four say that vocational education is available to high school students in their public school districts; (7) 40 percent say it is more important to prepare most high school students for work, and slightly more than 50 percent say it is more important to prepare them for college; (8) most say it is generally average students who take vocational education; (9) two out of three say it is advantageous for students to attend a vocational school or career center away from their high school; and (10) four out of five with children in school say a vocational program would be appropriate for at least one of their children. (CML)

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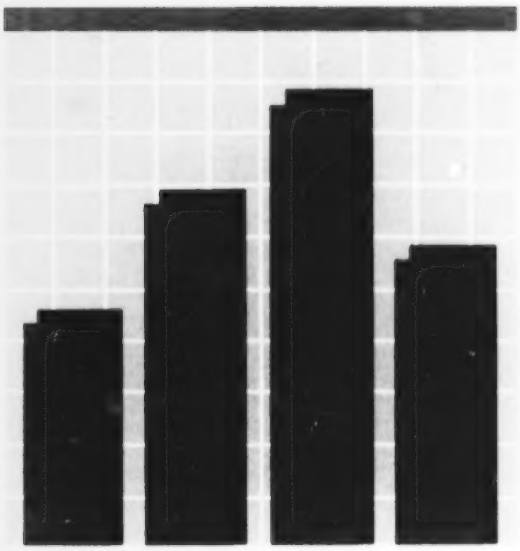
Ohio Council on Vocational Education 1989



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What Ohioans Say About Vocational Education

ED 523 373

This report is based on a scientific sampling of public opinion about vocational education in Ohio.

The study was sponsored by the Ohio Council on Vocational Education and conducted in September, 1988, by the Institute for Policy Research, University of Cincinnati, as part of the "Ohio Poll." Dr. George Bishop, Senior Research Associate, directed the study. Interviewers telephoned 820 Ohioans, who responded to ten specific questions about vocational education in Ohio.

Insights gained from this study should be useful to communities that wish to provide the most appropriate and highest quality vocational education programs to all who can benefit from them.

A complete copy of this study is available from the Council upon request.

Joseph L. Davis
Dr. Joseph L. Davis
Executive Director

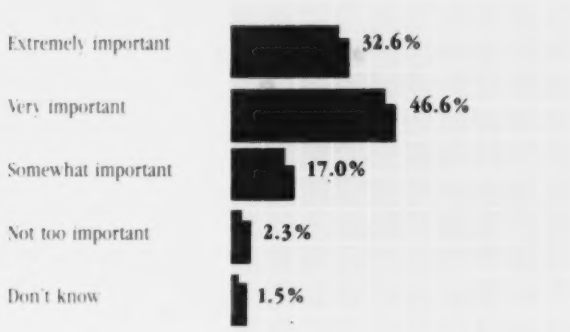
Robert Y. Farrington
Robert Y. Farrington
Chairperson

Four out of five Ohioans say it's "extremely important" or "very important" that vocational education continues to be part of the high school education program.

Question:

"How important do you think it is that vocational education continues to be part of the high school education program in Ohio—would you say it is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important?"

Responses:



Those most likely to say vocational education is "extremely important" are:

- People living in households where someone has taken a vocational education program

Those most likely to say it is "very important" are:

- People who have children currently enrolled in school

Nearly one of every two Ohio-ans, their spouses, or one of their children has taken a vocational program.

Question:

"Have you, your spouse, or any of your children ever taken a vocational education program in high school or as an adult, either in Ohio or some other state?"

Responses:

Those most likely to have had either *direct* or *indirect* experience with a vocational education program are:

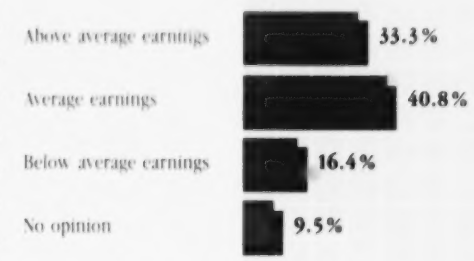
- Young adults (18–29)
- Men
- High school graduates (as a group)
- Middle income families ($20,000–$29,999)
- People employed in skilled or semi-skilled occupations
- People living in larger households (3 or more adults, especially)
- Residents of non-metropolitan areas
- Labor union households

One out of three Ohioans say that earnings of vocational graduates are above average, compared to those of other high school graduates who do not go to college. Four out of ten say the earning power of vocational graduates is about average.

Question:

"From what you know, or from what you have heard or read, do you think the wages or salaries earned by graduates of *high school-vocational* education programs are above average, below average, or about average, as compared to other high school graduates *who do not go to college?*

Responses:



Those most likely to think the earning power of graduates of vocational programs was "above average" are:

- Young adults
- Whites
- Men
- College educated
- Upper income families

Those most likely to think the earning power of vocational program graduates was "average" are:

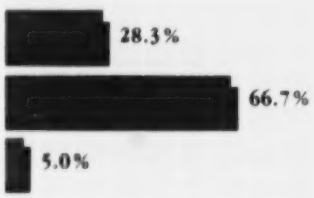
- Older adults (46 and older)
- Blacks
- People with less than a high school education
- Lower income families

Two out of three Ohioans say that taking a vocational program in high school does not limit opportunities to go to a four-year college.

Question:

"Do you think that taking a vocational education program in high school limits the opportunity of a student to go to a regular four-year college if he or she wants to, or do you think it makes no difference?"

Responses:



Those most likely to say that taking a vocational program in high school *limits* a student's opportunity to go to college are:

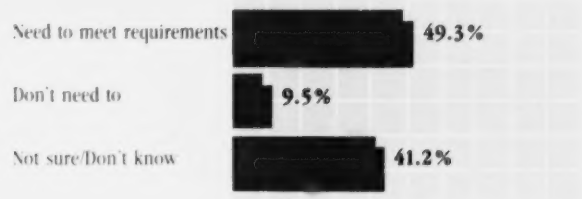
- College graduates
- Upper income families
- Professional people

One out of two Ohioans know that vocational students have to meet the same academic requirements for graduation as other students.

Question:

"Do you happen to know whether vocational education students have to meet the same academic course requirements for graduation as other students?"

Responses:



Those most likely *not* to know or to be uncertain about these requirements are:

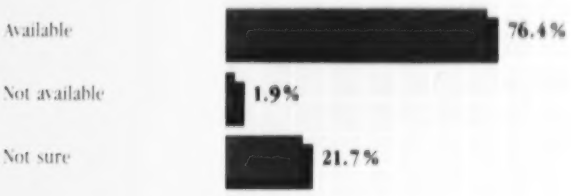
- Senior citizens
- People with less than a high school education
- Lower income families
- People living in households without children, or without children currently enrolled in school
- Single adult households
- People living in households in which no one has taken a vocational education program
- Residents of southwest Ohio
- Households without an educator
- Non-union households

Three out of four Ohioans say that vocational education is available in their school district.

Question:

"Do you happen to know whether any vocational education program is available to high school students from your public school district?"

Responses:



Those most likely *not* to know vocational education was available are:

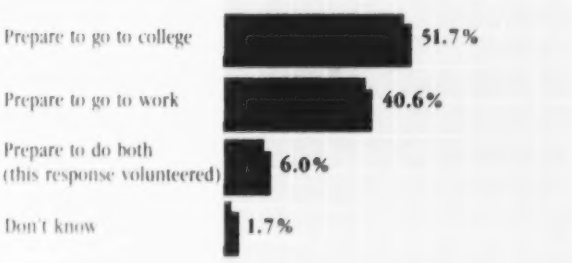
- Senior citizens
- Blacks
- People with less than a high school education
- Lower income families
- People living in households without children
- People living in households in which no one has ever taken a vocational education program
- Single adult households
- Residents of southwest Ohio
- Residents of metropolitan areas
- People living in non-union households

One out of two Ohioans say it's more important to prepare the majority of high school students for college than for work. Nearly half say it's more important to prepare the majority for work or for both work and college.

Question:

"Do you think it is more important for the public high schools in Ohio to prepare the *majority* of students to go to college or to prepare the *majority* of them for getting jobs after they graduate from high school?"

Responses:



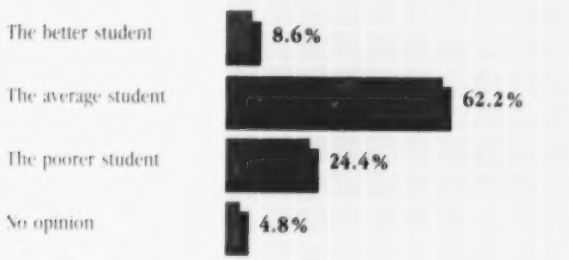
Labor union households are more likely to favor preparing students for jobs.

Most Ohioans say it's generally the average student who takes vocational education.

Question:

"What type of student do you think takes vocational education classes—do you think it is generally the better student, the poorer student, or the average student?"

Responses:



Those most likely to think of the better student as the one who generally takes vocational education classes are:

- People with a high school education (or less)
- People employed in semi-skilled occupations
- People living in labor union households

Those most likely to think of the poorer student as the one who typically takes vocational education classes are:

- College graduates (42.7% of them thought this way)
- Upper income families
- People employed in professional or technical occupations
- Educators

Two out of three Ohioans say it's an advantage for students to attend a vocational school or career center away from their own high school.

Question:

"Generally speaking, do you think it is an *advantage* or *disadvantage* for students to attend a joint vocational school or career center away from their regular public high school?"

Responses:

Those most likely to consider it an *advantage* are:

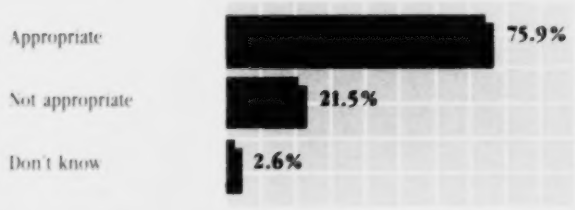
- Young adults (18–29)
- High school graduates
- People living in households in which someone has taken a vocational education program
- Residents of non-metropolitan areas

Four out of five Ohioans with children in school say that a vocational education program would be appropriate for at least one of their children.

Question:

(TO THE 228 RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN IN SCHOOL) "Do you think a vocational education program would be appropriate for any of these children when they are in high school?"

Responses:



Those most likely to favor vocational education for one or more of their children are:

- People with less than a high school education
- Lower and middle income families
- People employed in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations

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